

March, “Hail to the Spirit of Liberty”

John Philip Sousa

In 1900, John Philip Sousa and his band performed at the Paris Exposition. Sousa was a great patriot and relished the opportunity to represent his country at such a significant international event. In addition, this was the very first overseas tour for the Sousa Band, and the group was welcomed with tremendous enthusiasm across Europe. During the Paris Exposition, an impressive statue of Major General the Marquis de Lafayette was unveiled on July 4, 1900. The monument was presented “on behalf of the children of the United States” and depicted Lafayette on horseback offering his sword in support of the Americans during the Revolutionary War. For the unveiling, the statue was draped in an enormous American flag. Sousa composed “Hail to the Spirit of Liberty” specifically for the grand occasion.